MONTEREY NEWS

February 2006
VOLUME XXXVI · Number 2

The Town

Town Hall

Town Secretary Melissa Noe reminded the Select Board that a letter of instruction from the Town Clerk is needed to purge old files.

The Select Board was assured that there was federal money to repair the dam behind the Library, but learned later that because of alleged reporting problems Monterey would not receive such funds. Emergency Manager Ray Tryon said that he and Director of Operations Maynard Forbes visited the dam with a FEMA representative several days after the flood, but no pictures were taken nor did they report the visit to the Select Board so it could act in a timely fashion. Subsequently the Select Board requested that Tryon or whoever is acting as Emergency Manager in his absence be more forthcoming with necessary information to those who must be kept informed.

In his role of Emergency Manager, Tryon notified the Select Board that it and other town employees must take the required National Incident Management System (NIMS) training or risk losing all state funding. Police Chief Gareth Backhaus has a list of who needs to take the training, which includes the Select Board, the Board of Health, and others. Select Board member Jon Sylbert has the course material and tutorials from the NIMS website, and will act as the Select Board liaison for this project.

The Select Board completed a draft of the sexual harassment policy and sent it to Town Counsel Jerry Scully for his review. It will become part of the town handbook, and each year all town employees must sign it.

Miller asked Noe to contact CET (Center for Ecological Technology) to

Edith Ross

"The woods are lovely, dark, and deep" on a winter's day along Gould Road.

find out if the town can use its Clean Energy funds for energy-efficient ballpark lighting. The Park Commission will be consulted on this issue.

Riccardo Boehm, owner of the General Store building, and Kenn Basler, owner of the General Store business, addressed the Select Board about the constant flooding of the basement of the store and the persistent problems with the septic system of the neighboring Post Office. Tryon said that the dam was built in 1740. Moreover, the store has been there since 1780, and water has been in its basement ever since. Tryon reiterated his belief that private property owners who choose to live or work in flood plains must expect to suffer from occasional basement flooding, as he does with his own property. Forbes noted that since October 1, Monterey has received 33 inches of precipitation. The normal or expected precipitation for a year is 46–48 inches.

Boehm and Basler questioned the use of boards on the dam, asking how much they contribute to flooding. A lengthy discussion of the necessity of the dam for fire protection, the actual height of the water table, and historical issues followed. Select Board chair Michèle Miller concluded the discussion by noting that this was the first meeting on the subject and those involved should think about what they learned from the meeting.

Police Department

On January 9, Chief Backhaus reported on two motor vehicle accidents, various abandoned 911 calls and false alarms. On January 23, Backhaus reported on abandoned 911 calls on Art School Road and Blue Hill Road; a Fire Department medical call on Blue Hill Road; disabled motor vehicles on Main and Brett Roads, Blue Hill Road, and Tyringham Road; and a lockout on Hupi Road. In an incident concerning the violation of a restraining order, the state police had to be called.

Backhaus stated that in the future, the Police Department will be the initial contact for dog bite incidents, but then the Board of Health will take responsibility for the matter. The Police Department will provide whatever assistance the Board of Health needs.

Operations

Director of Operations Maynard Forbes reported that the estimate to repair the dam is $285,000, with an additional $54,000 for engineering costs. Management and oversight of the work will bring the final total to $400,000. Forbes said that the town will have to fix the dam or remove it altogether now that the state Dam Safety Office has the problems on record. Furthermore, the dam must be registered.

Select Board chair Miller asked Forbes about the plan for Fairview Road, and expressed her desire that the road be the top item on the Highway Department's list of projects in the spring. The April 10th evening meeting of the Select Board will be devoted to Fairview Road.

Because most of the storms this winter have been at nights or on weekends, Forbes said his department is racking up a lot of overtime, but the amount is not out of line with previous years.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Ray Tryon told the Select Board that with the passage of the Marty McNamara Law (named for a volunteer firefighter killed in the line of duty in Worcester), which provides death benefits for survivors of volunteer firefighters and other volunteer public safety personnel, Monterey will need to carry substantial insurance polices for emergency personnel. The insurance company will advise about the cost of this insurance, which all towns in Massachusetts are confronting. Tryon said that not all towns are buying the insurance, opting instead to bear the cost of paying death benefits to emergency personnel, if and when necessary, out of town coffers.

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Tryon reported that the Fire Department had calls for three severe accidents in December.

Building Commissioner

The Select Board will appropriate $6,240 from free cash to the Building Commissioner's account, bringing his salary up to last year's average. This amount will cover his salary for fourteen hours per week, up from the ten hours currently budgeted.

Building Commissioner Don Torrico announced that Gould Farm received a temporary certificate of occupancy for its new group residence, and that within ninety days he and Fire Chief Ray Tryon will conduct a fire drill to insure that every occupant can exit safely within a well-defined time frame.

The Select Board has received a number of letters from citizens and contractors praising Torrico's job performance.

Torrico reported that fines have been levied on the Gilmore property, but they have not been paid. He also noted that the law requires that educational facilities must have two bathrooms, a point brought up about Gould Farm's new educational and maintenance facility.

Michael Storch

Dick Tryon, Steve Kahn, Len Simon, and Marty Cherneff enjoying the proceedings at the Christmas hayride.

This and That

Friends of the Wilson McLaughlin House (FWMH) committee member Joe Baker brought to the Select Board a copy of the RFP (request for proposal) that it will send to about sixty architects. The proposal lists FWMH's objectives, which include retaining the looks and proportion of the exterior of the house.

A transfer of $10,000 from the Assessors's Cadastral Mapping account will be transferred to the Assistant Assessor's account. Three firms have replied to requests for estimates for the town audit.

Inspector of Animals Bob Danelli asked the Select Board for clarification on the town's policy on insurance for town employees, appointees, and subcontractors. Some confusion over the difference between appointees and subcontractors needs to be cleared up.

It was noted that there are lacunae in the recording of minutes of some of the Planning Board meetings.

The Select Board will present an item for the May Annual Town Meeting warrant so that the Education Committee will become a regular town committee.

— Laurily K. Epstein

See next page for Town Meeting report.

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5 Articles Pass, 1 Defeated at Special Town Meeting

For a while it looked as if the proceedings would go smoothly at the well-attended January 27th Special Town Meeting. The first four articles were passed by voice vote after relatively little discussion. Article 1 appropriated $35,000 from Free Cash for flood damage. Article 2 appropriated $15,000 from free Cash to the Fire Department Expense Account to cover cost of engine repairs to a fire truck. Article 3 transferred $10,000 from the Cadastral Mapping Account to the Assistant Assessor Account, and Article 4 appropriated $4,000 from Free Cash for cemetery mapping.

A long discussion ensued when Article 5, to transfer $1,950 from the Building Inspector Clerk Account to the Building Commissioner Account, came before the meeting. The transfer was intended to cover the Building Commissioner's compensation for the additional hours he has been putting in. Those in favor of the transfer said that the commissioner was doing a good job, that the additional hours were needed to do the building inspection job properly, and that the commissioner should be compensated accordingly. Those opposed felt that the town had decided the issue of compensation for the entire fiscal year at last May's Annual Town Meeting and that no additional money should be allocated. Eventually there was a motion for a secret ballot, which passed. The article was then defeated relatively handily.

Article 6, dealing with the same issue, requested the appropriation of $4,290 from Free Cash to the Building Commissioner Account. The amount of the request was cut in half after it was pointed out from the floor that the $4,290 figure was based on the entire fiscal year rather than on the five remaining months. Then the discussion, which was again lengthy although the issues were the same as those brought up in the previous discussion, turned heated and raucous. This time, after a motion for a secret ballot was narrowly defeated, the article was passed by a narrow margin.

By now almost everyone was exhausted, and Article 7, to allow direct deposit of town employees' pay, upon their request, was tabled.

— Will Marsh

February Community Potluck

Our next community potluck dinner on Wednesday, February 8, will feature a talk by Monterey resident MaryKate Jordan titled "Living the American Dream: Why Sedna Matters." MaryKate, an astrology and history buff, will explore the impact of the 2003 discovery of the planet Sedna and explain her research on the parallels she has found in astronomy, astrology, and the shifts these findings reflect in personal and group consciousness. She will discuss how Sedna's discovery can serve as a template for those wishing to consciously live the American dream.

The dinner begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Monterey Meetinghouse. Please bring something to share, a serving utensil for your contribution, and a place setting for yourself. Everyone is welcome.

Those attending last month's dinner were treated to a wonderful presentation by Bidwell House Museum director Martha Dailey on "Resourcefulness of Mid-Eighteent-Century Women of the Berkshires." Along with her fascinating presentation, she brought many artifacts from the museum's collection for us to see. Thank you, Martha.

Note that the date of the April potluck has been changed from April 12 to April 19 so it will not interfere with religious celebrations. Please help us spread the word.

In case of bad weather on community potluck nights, please check with the church answering machine (528-5850) for cancellations and postponements.

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Planning Board News

The Planning Board decided at its January 12th meeting to contribute a monthly article to the *Monterey News*. The discussion was instigated by what board members considered poor wording and representation in the Town News in the January issue of the Monterey News. Specifically the article referred to the "$6500 given the Planning Board" for work on a Master Plan. The Planning Board applied for and received a Community Development Block Grant for that amount, and applied those funds to work with Joel Russell a well-known land-use attorney. It is from information that the board collected from Joel Russell that the current Accessory Dwelling Unit Bylaw proposal stems. (Stay tuned next month for more info on the ADU proposal.) Russell was a great resource and left the Planning Board with various strategies for, what some call "smart growth." There are also some cumbersome and intrusive regulatory nightmares in the mix as well, and no doubt the collective wisdom of our town will cull the good from the bad.

Which brings us to the current Planning Board adventure: the creation of a Master Plan. Select Board chair Michèle Miller stated that much of the work for the Master Plan was already contained in the Community Development Plan which the Select Board and others worked so hard to complete in 2003.

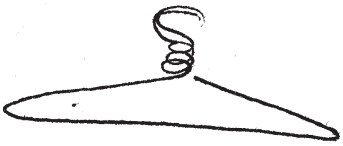
With that information made clear, the Planning Board consulted with Rob Hoogs at our January 26th meeting. Rob, an engineer and principal in the firm Brown and Associates, lives in Monterey with his wife, Cindy Hoogs, who is on the Planning Board. When they lived in Great Barrington Rob was instrumental in the creation of Great Barrington's Master Plan. This is a real stroke of good fortune for the Planning Board. Rob generously agreed to review the Community Development Plan and meet with the Planning Board to educate us about what we need to do to complete a Master Plan.

Basically, most (but not all) of the information has been collected and the "visioning" part of the plan is done; that is contained in the aforementioned Community Development Plan. (By the way, Monterey's Community Development Plan is an interesting and nifty document and worth perusal by all interested citizens. Kudos to the folks who worked so hard on it.) Hoogs stated that to create a Master Plan the Planning Board must match the desires reflected in the Community Development Plan with implementation ideas and procedures; basically ways to make it happen. As Rob stated, "If there is no provision for implementation then there is, in effect, no goal."

To create intelligent and effective implementation strategies the Planning Board will need to consult with representatives from each of the town boards as well as people from a broad spectrum of life and interests in Monterey. The Planning Board needs to convene a Master Plan Committee that will work on the various elements of the Master Plan and come together to brainstorm ways to make the goals and visions stated in the Community Development Plan come to life. It's a great committee to be involved with because it has a mission and when that mission is completed, no more committee. It will be a finite effort with concrete results.

In the coming months you can expect to read about the process and perhaps be inspired to jump in and lend a hand. The Planning Board meets twice monthly, and our next meeting will be Thursday, February 9, at 7 p.m. To get on our agenda or for questions regarding Planning Board business, please contact Maggie Leonard at 528-1170.

— Maggie Leonard



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Report from the Tree Warden

We started off the past year with a spring planting of 24 trees in four locations in town, the first being Barnum Flats at the intersection of Route 23 and Curtiss Road. Starting at this location and heading east, we planted nine trees. Our second planting location was at Greene Park at the request of the Park Commission, where we planted five trees. Our third location was just east of the old firehouse on Route 23, where we also planted five. The fourth planting was at the berm on Route 23, also five trees. The trees are tagged to identify their species and include the following: *Tilia cordata* (greenspire) linden; *Tilia amer.* (Redmondi) linden; *Platanus acer* (bloodgood) London plane; *Gleditsia ti* (shademaster) locust; *Ulmus* (accolade) elm; *Ulmus* (homstead) elm, *Aesculus carnea briotii* horse chestnut; *Aesculus hippo* (Baumannii) horse chestnut; *Pyrus* (aristocrat) pear; *Liriodendron tulipifera* Tulip tree; *Cercis canadensis* redbud; *Syringa reticulata* lilac; *Sorbus auc* (cardinal royal) mountain ash; *Prunis sargentii* cherry; and *Ginkgo bilboa* (magyar) ginkgo.

The trees were shipped as 1.5-inch diameter and bare root. By buying bare root trees the savings can be as much as 60 percent with the same survival rate. The species I chose are more tolerant to road salt than other species that grow along our highways. Two of the trees died and one tree planted by the playground at Greene Park just plain disappeared. We're on the lookout for a loose tree running around.

The 24 trees cost $2,078 or $86.58 per tree and were paid for out of my $1,100) budget and $1,000 from the Monterey Preservation Land Trust. I donated use of a dump truck, backhoe, and five yards of compost and mulch for the planting. Gould Farm guests and staff were wonderful in helping plant, water, and stake the trees. This process went on all summer and the watering will need to be continued next summer.

We will be planting every year and would like to know where you would like to have trees planted along our town roadways.

Tree species that we are trying to bring back to Monterey are the elm and chestnut trees. We bought 150 liberty elms in the last twelve years and have only a few remaining. They were not disease resistant enough and died from Dutch elm disease. We planted a Princeton elm between the town hall and the river in 2004, in addition to the two new varieties we planted in 2005. Bob Rausch of Monterey is interested in the research being done on the development of a disease-resistant American chestnut and has been keeping me posted on that progress.

Salt on our roads is another issue that I would like to touch upon. It is very harmful and is killing our roadside trees. I have tried to get our town officials to mix it with sand on our side roads as an experiment. Much too much salt is being used when there is just a flurry or a light coating of 1/2 inch of snow. The evidence of excessive salt is visible when there is no snow or ice left to melt and salt is still in its granulated form. The graveled roads receive this mix of salt and sand, are often ice and snow packed and are traveled at the same approximate speed as our paved side roads. I wish the town would make some compromises and ask that you lobby them to do so.

At time of this printing you will all have had time to review this past January's hearing introduced by the Select Board to make a bylaw change to have the Tree Warden's position change from an elected to an appointed one. I would like to speak to this issue from two points of view. First, I am presently empowered by the people,which is democracy, and I would go so far as to support any effort to make a government-held appointed position in Monterey become elected. How can anyone look at all the pain and suffering in the world and not agree that power in the hands of so few is harmful. The second point which I would like to address is that the Select Board can lobby me themselves as well as the townspeople about what they would like their tree Warden to be doing. In closing, I am grateful and proud to be elected by the townspeople and always look forward to hearing from you.

— Roger Tryon,
Monterey Tree Warden

Peter S. Vallianos
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Daffodil Days Support Cancer Research

The 2006 Daffodil Cancer Campaign is under way. Once again, I will be coordinating the fundraiser for the Monterey area, with the help of our dedicated volunteers. Your participation in Daffodil Days will help raise important funds to support cancer research and the local programs for prevention and early detection. We have all been touched by this disease, whether it be a family member, friend, or just a sad story passed on. Brighten your day or someone else's with a bouquet for $7 or the new Boyds Bear limited edition for $25.

Orders must be in no later than February 10 and will be ready for pick-up at the Monterey General Store by March 24. Our dedicated local volunteers will be making phone calls over the next two weeks. Please contact Pat Mielke, 528-5603, with any questions, or to place an order. Thank you for your continued support.

— Pat Mielke

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Notes from the Library

The book discussion group for nine-to-twelve-year-olds discussed *Storm-blast* last month and will be discussing *The Secret School* by Avi on Monday, February 6, at 7 p.m. *The Secret School,* which has also been nominated to receive the Massachusetts Book Award, is about a fourteen-year-old girl living in Colorado in 1925 who wants to be a teacher, and has to deal with the closing of her town's one-room schoolhouse. Voting for the book award will take place in March. Children in the fourth through sixth grade will be able to vote for the award, but anyone can vote for Monterey's own award from the same list. Come to the library for details.

New Acquisitions

Adult Fiction

Death Dance, Linda Fairstein
Leaving Home, Anita Brookner
The Cat Who Dropped a Bombshell, Lillian Jackson Braun
Forever Odd, Dean Koontz
On Beauty, Zadie Smith
Scorpion's Gate, Richard Clarke
The Sea, John Banville
Hidden Diary of Marie Antoinette, Carol Erickson
Brooklyn Follies, Paul Auster
Turning Angel, Greg Iles

Adult Nonfiction:

Woman at the Washington Zoo, Marjorie Williams
Explorers: The Most Exciting Voyages of Discovery, Andre De Porti
On Desire: Why We Want What We Want, William Irvine
You're Wearing That? Understanding Mothers and Daughters in Conversation, Deborah Tannen
The Five Lessons a Millionaire Taught Me, Richard Paul Evans
Cool Stuff and How It Works, Chris Woodford
The Beatles, Bob Spitz

Children

Blood Stone, Jamila Gavin
Mummies: The Newest, Coolest, and Creepiest, Shelley Tanaka
Knitgirl: Learn to Knit with 15 Fun and Funkey Projects, Shannon Okey
Room with a Zoo, Jules Feiffer
Greeting Card Making, Deborah Hufford
Computers: Processing the Data, Gina Deangelis

Picture Books

Captain Flinn and the Pirate Dinosaurs, Giles Andreae
Problem with Chickens, Bruce McMillan
Just in Case, Judith Viorst
Bess and Bella, Irene Haas

— Mark Makuc

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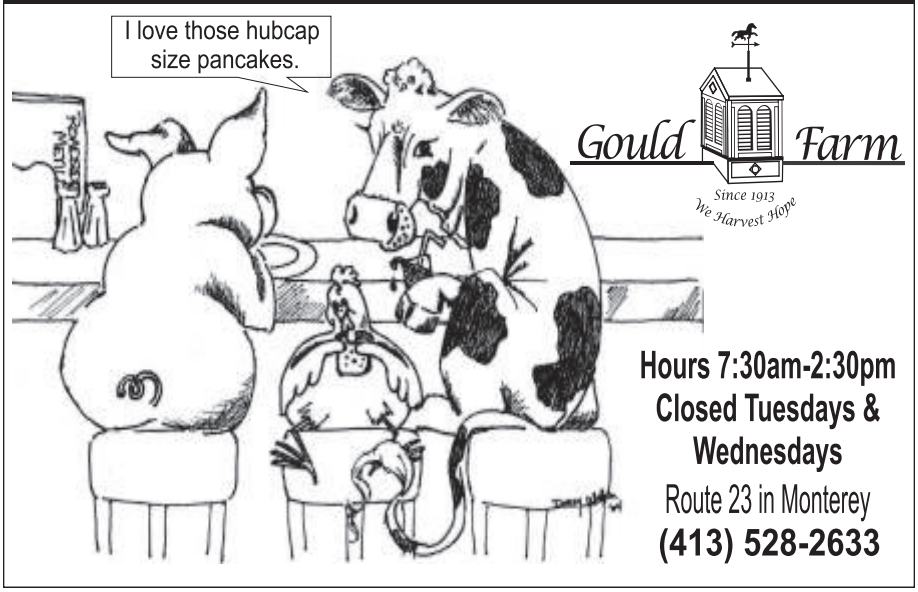

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Change for Friends of Lake Garfield, LakeFest & Weeds

As the calendar turns to 2006, several changes are in store for the Friends of Lake Garfield:

1) FLG is reorganizing as a non-profit affinity group without tax-exempt status.

2) FLG is working with the Select Board to try and improve the effectiveness of drawdown to better control invasive plant growth in Lake Garfield.

3) LakeFest 2006 may not happen.

Change in FLG Organization

The Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (BTCF) has changed its fee structure for affiliated groups under their management. The new fees are many times what FLG has paid in the past and beyond the capability of FLG.

The FLG Steering Committee has decided to form a nonprofit affinity group. The two biggest changes will be the loss of tax-exempt status and the need for FLG to manage its own bookkeeping. The current FLG officers are serving beyond their terms because no one stepped up to take those responsibilities last summer. Unless the FLG membership embraces a more active participation there seems little point in trying to form a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation needing continuous management.

In recent years the tax-exempt status obtained within BTCF allowed FLG to raise funds beyond nominal membership dues. The majority of these funds were raised to create LakeFest as a way to bring a wider community to appreciate the lake as a resource for all of Monterey. FLG funds have also been used for testing the water, buying materials to set up the loosestrife biological control project in Brewer Pond, mailing materials to educate lakefront property owners about loosestrife and other lake-related issues, starting a watershed awareness campaign (more about this in the coming months), maintaining a web site, joining the Lakes and Ponds Association (LAPA), and participating in seminars to learn of methods for protecting the lake.

How FLG Works with Town

Many things need to be addressed in the care and keeping of Lake Garfield. FLG can be the source of information and public pressure, and over the years FLG has contributed funds to assist the town with various lake-related projects. However, the authority and responsibility to take action resides with town and state governments.

It is important to remember that town government actions and the spending of public funds depend on resident voters making choices. Many voters who do not live near or use the lake may need to be persuaded to support town actions and public funds to protect the lake as a resource for everyone now and in the future.

Tax-paying property owners who are not residents look to the town to adequately manage the resources of our community for all of us. The mission of FLG is to focus attention on the environmental challenges facing the lake because of how we all live around it and in its watershed area. Explaining this and promoting practices that protect the quality of the water and habitat of the lake are what FLG is all about.

Drawdown

The practice of lake drawdown in the fall is the best and most economic tool for the management of invasive weeds. Historically this practice has been going on in Lake Garfield for about thirty years. Support for this practice has waxed and waned in the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The current administration of DEP has dramatically changed its view and now strongly supports this practice. This is the time to take the practice of drawdown for Lake Garfield to a higher level of scientific management to improve effectiveness. Pat Edelstein and her Ecology Team attended meetings sponsored by LAPA with the participation of several state agencies, primarily the DEP. The upshot is a strong and scientifically based approval of drawdown for weed abatement and overall preservation of lakes and ponds. More effective management of invasive weeds has been shown to extend the life of lakes.

At the moment the Town of Monterey has a three-year extension of the current drawdown permit. However, this permit perpetuates start and refill dates unrelated

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to weather factors and alternating drawdown depths of three feet, six feet, three feet unrelated to plant and animal types and locations. A lot more flexibility can be built into the permit application to accommodate weather and other environmental factors impacting the effectiveness of drawdown.

FLG is currently working with the Select Board and the Conservation Commission to improve the drawdown permit with a new application. A consultant with biological and environmental qualifications will have to be hired to manage the permit application and evaluate the results each year to further improve the effectiveness of subsequent drawdowns. This will cost thousands of dollars, with the major share spent at the outset to improve the permit we are operating under. In a time of budget restraints this looks difficult.

Over the past five years FLG has accumulated a nest egg that allowed expenditures for projects and LakeFest in advance of soliciting membership dues and contributions. The FLG Steering Committee has decided that the best use of these funds is to pay for the consultant necessary to improve the permit for drawdowns. This means choosing between improving drawdown and having fireworks at LakeFest, if it continues this year.

It is the intent of FLG to provide the funds for the initial consulting work to obtain an improved permit. The town will need to budget funds to gather the data each spring and summer over the next three years to better manage the drawdown each fall. This continuing work could be less costly if volunteers are taught to do the evaluations under the direction of the scientific consultant.

Possible Increase in Weeds

Weather events of this fall will likely lead to increased weed infestation next summer. A three-foot drawdown was begun immediately after Columbus Day, but the newly exposed lake bottom was quickly covered by snow. The snow provides insulation against the cold exposure needed to kill off weeds. Then the weather warmed and heavy rains refilled the lake, again protecting the weeds. Be prepared! The weeds may be very heavy next summer. This is why FLG is making a strong commitment to manage the drawdown on a more scientific basis.

LakeFest

LakeFest 2006 may not happen. At this writing no one has stepped forward to take over its management.

While FLG will not be contributing $5,000 to LakeFest this year, a wonderful LakeFest can be organized around beach activities including music and dancing for about $5,000 instead of the $10,000 required to include fireworks. The May Town Meeting Warrant will have an article again asking for $2,500 for LakeFest as it did in 2005. The remaining $2,500 for this downsized LakeFest can probably be raised from FLG members and Monterey businesses. The contributions would go into the town's LakeFest Account. The date for LakeFest, whether to sell souvenir posters, and other decisions are waiting for the new LakeFest Manager to take the reins.

— Janet Cathcart

Monterey Democrats Caucus

All registered Democrats in Monterey are invited to caucus on Saturday, February 4, at 10 a.m. in the Meetinghouse basement to elect a delegate and an alternate to attend the 2006 Massachusetts Democratic Convention. All candidates must be present in order to be elected. The convention will be held in Worcester on June 2nd and 3rd and will endorse candidates for state offices whose names will be placed on the September 19th Democratic primary ballot.

There will be a Democratic Town Committee meeting following the caucus. For more information contact Muriel Lazzarini at malazz.map.com or 528-5796.

Emergency Calls Reminder

Dial 911 for all EMERGENCY-related calls. If you have a non-emergency, non-life-threatening issue that needs police assistance please call the police dispatch at 528-3211. If you would like to leave a voice message for an officer, please call 528-1443, ext. 16.

— Melissa Noe

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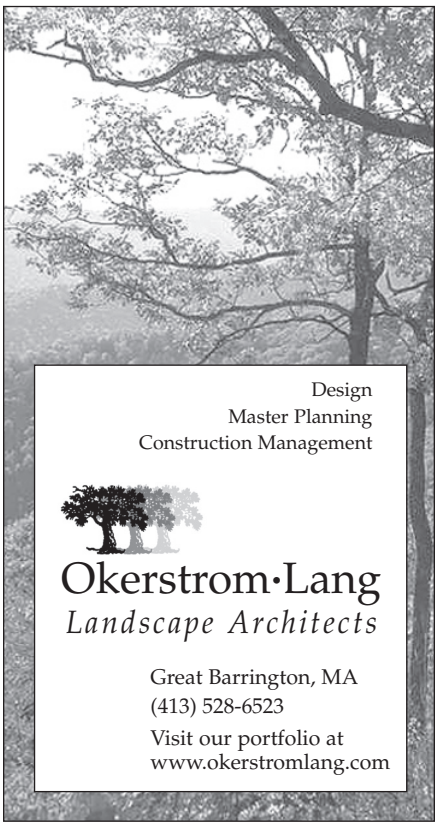

Cultural Council Events Coming Up

Award-winning painter Gregory Maichack will lead a pastel workshop on Friday, February 17, from 7:00–9:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Meetinghouse. The program is open to any teens and adults regardless of their art background and experience. The workshop will be a combination of demonstration and hands-on creating with supplied, professional-grade materials. The program, sponsored by the Monterey Cultural Council and partially funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, is free, although pre-registration is required since space is limited. Call Joe Baker at 528-9385 with questions or to register.

Back by popular demand, Hootenanny returns to Monterey on Friday, March 10. Music lovers are invited to gather at 7:00 p.m. at the Meetinghouse for this free event where musicians from Monterey and the surrounding community come together to play music and sing the winter blues away. The last time we did this the church was full of wonderful talent and an enthusiastic audience, which together created one of the highlights of the year. Anyone, amateur or pro, who wants to bring an instrument and participate is encouraged to do so. Call Joe Baker (528-9385) or Joel Schick (528-3128) with questions.

As with all Council events, in case of bad weather check the church answering machine (528-5850) for cancellations and postponements.

Monterey Republican Town Committee Notes

The Monterey Republican Town Committee will be seeking candidates for election to local offices in May. Our caucus will be March 4, 1:30 p.m. in the Meetinghouse basement. At that time all registered Republicans are invited to vote on final nominations for the local election. A committee meeting will precede the caucus at 1 p.m. to finalize the ballot. Anyone interested in running for local office, regardless of party affiliation, should contact either Mark Makuc, 528-1382, or Fran Amidon, 528-1233, as soon as possible. Letters of intention to run may be sent to P.O. Box 711, Monterey, MA 01245. Thank you.

Mark your calendars also for 2:00 p.m. on April 8, when the Thunder Bay Ensemble will perform theatrical traditions of Bali with gamelan music, masks, and dance at the Meetinghouse. This event will be free and appropriate for all ages. Watch the *Monterey News* for more details.

Brush Burning Permits

Open burning is allowed in some Massachusetts towns, including Monterey, subject to certain requirements and responsibilities issued and enforced by the State Fire Marshals Office, DEP, and your local Fire Department. These guidelines include the following:

- Permits can be obtained from January 15 to April 30.
- You must obtain a permit for open burning from the Monterey Fire Department by calling **528-1734.**
- Residents must call on the day they will be burning; no permits are issued ahead of time. The permit is good for one day only.
- Burning hours start at 10 a.m. and all fires must be out by 4 p.m.
- Burning materials will be confined to brush only. **All other materials are prohibited.**
- Burning piles must be kept small and controllable
- No burning within 75 ft. of a building.
- Have a method of extinguishment and tools available.
- Never leave the fire unattended for any reason.
- Permits are issued weather permitting. Burning is not allowed every day.
- Don't wait until the end of April; you will be disappointed if you wait till the last minute. The burning season will not be extended.

Make sure you call for a permit at 528-1734 and leave your name, the address of where you are burning, and a phone number.

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Every winter, we apply products to sidewalks and roads to reduce ice and snow build up. As of 2001, Massachusetts led the nation in the rate of road salt used per lane of highway per mile. Salt (sodium chloride) is the most common deicer; however salts build up in the soil and reduce plants' ability to absorb water and nutrients. Salt also contaminates drinking water supplies, streams, and rivers.

Unfortunately, no environmentally perfect solution will keep roads and sidewalks clear of ice besides shoveling and scraping. Reducing the use of products that contain high levels of chlorides and urea, which pose health risks to employees and the environment, is a good first step. Potassium and magnesium chlorides are available, moderately priced, and easy to apply to sidewalks, walkways, and entrances. They contain fewer chlorides than traditional road salt. However, they may contain metals.

Here are some steps to take to prevent overuse of salt:

- Ash, kitty litter or sand can increase traction.
- Shovel soon after it snows to prevent ice buildup and reduce the need for salt.
- Read labels carefully.
- Apply deicers according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Select deicers with calcium chloride (which can have a positive impact on the soil and vegetation) rather than sodium chloride (which can harm nearby plants and the soil).
- Salt is strong; don't use more than you must.

For more information, visit www.cetonline.org/Links/links.htm or contact Ruth Dinerman at CET by email at ruthd@cetonline.org or by calling 413-445-4556, ext 16.

Imagine … The Monterey Community Center

For me, February offers up time for dreaming. The goats are pregnant and not making milk so I don't have to get up at 4:30 a.m. I am no longer exhausted and there is opportunity to imagine what could be.

This February, I am stretching my imagination trying to come up with some incredibly clever way to ferry the goats back and forth across the driveway to the new hay barn so they can eat the hay that is stored there. It is not a pressing issue, but I am trying to imagine a way they can cross without actually walking on the driveway because they drop what we call nanny berries in the road, and I don't like that. I then have to insist that the driveway be swept every time they cross, which is time consuming, and sometimes sweeping the driveway with a broom feels foolish even though the task results in folks (including myself) enjoying their time at the farm because it is so tidy. Today, I am leaning toward an ingeniously designed well-drained passageway under the road but who knows, maybe it will be a fancy drawbridge or we'll roll out some sort of magical carpet.

Historically, this is the month I pore over the seed catalogs, try new things, and create the best garden ever in my mind. I love doing this. I relish the fact that it feels a bit reckless because I know how busy the summer can be and how quickly the garden can get out of control. I save it to do after taxes … like dessert.

Similarly, imagining all the activities that will be taking place a few Februaries from now at the future Monterey Community Center fills me with excitement. Once the Wilson McLaughlin House is renovated, the town will have this building in which to hold a wide range of community events.

I invite you to imagine a winter's day at the center: an early morning walk (or ski) around the 28-acre property or down New Marlboro Road with neighbors and hot drinks inside afterwards (maybe there would be a fire in the fireplace!); a mid-morning yoga or exercise class; daily BYO lunch gatherings with varying themes like mothers and young children, book talk, needlework, current events etc.; a daily after-school drop-in program with school busses unloading at the center, safely back from the main road; evening gatherings to share computer tips, sing a capella, play bridge or Scrabble, sketch or paint, learn new things from your neighbors as they talk about their particular passions and interests; Saturday morning 4-H meetings, a snowshoeing clinic, a string ensemble practice. All this available close to home, in a cozy space with local art on the walls and the kettle always on.

This is where we're heading. Our latest milestone along the way is the news that our Building Committee recently mailed out the RFP to the potential architects. RFP is a Request for Proposals, which lays out what the project is about and what the goals are and asks interested architects to submit materials to us in a "competition" to see which architect we would like to work with. Any architect interested in the project can request a copy by emailing us at center@ccmonterey.org.

For more details about the project, check out our website: ccmonterey.org.

— Susan Sellew

ॐ

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I Lost My Heart in the Kitchen Sink

I wanted to make my valentines
Quite different this year than before.
I finally reached a decision ...
I'd make one instead of more.
I decided ... with the greatest care
I'd make a heart that <u>all</u> could share.
So I carefully mixed some Jell-O
And poured it into a mold
Then I put it in the fridge
To stay until set and cold.
When the Jell-O heart was ready
I got out my largest plate
And proceeded with my venture
Before it was too late.
I set the mold on the counter
Beside the kitchen sink
And over the mold I placed the plate;
Then, quicker than a wink
I turned them over together ...
The place, the Jell-O, and mold.
"This will look nice," I told myself,
"On this plate with lace-edged gold."
Then ... almost before I could blink
Off slid my heart right into the sink!

— Eleanor Kimberley

Blue kingdom

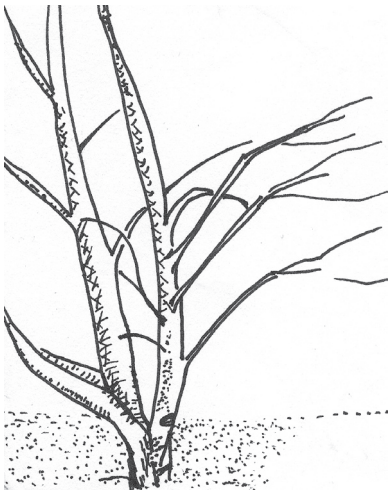
Swim with me in your dreams
deep down, down into the blue kingdom
beneath the sea:
time undulates there
light falls obliquely into a smooth
shimmer-ringing depth
and when thoughts are still
a lapping, nymphic music encapsulated
in globes and diadems
may be heard from sweet beings the other side of existence
a secret door to innocence
lies beneath every busy mind.

Swim with me in your dreams
deep down, down into the blue kingdom
beneath the sea:
let us read in sub-aqueous waters
those songs of love
written in liquid fire with quills of water-flame

knowing now what was felt
knowing now what was said
beneath waters of sleep, eyes open

we read truly for the first time
through limpid, lambent lenses of longing.

— A. O. Howell



Flying between Stones

The bones of stone open, and God pours in
for things most precious, most terrifying,
belong to us alone.

Today, a yellow bird broke her neck
flying too fast
she fell to my feet,
her feathers still warm.

Perhaps she never heard of gravity—
that if you fly too fast and high
something may snatch you
from ecstatic flight.
Or perhaps, just maybe,
she merely loved being
and knew we all give back
what was called 'our own'.
Is there grace to surrender,
when dawn demands it all?

Sometimes overnight, we break a bone, a heart,
or the years whittle our body
to one limb less—
'til little by little,
or in one brilliant collapse

the bones of stone open,
and in a moment most tender,
most alone, we join the yellow bird
and feel the warmth of sky.

— M. Hamilton

Midwinter Limericks

(when snowed in, try it!)

There once was a man from Belize
who tried very hard not to sneeze
he coughed and he hacked
and he threw out his back
so, now he can't bend to his knees.

There once was a girl from Upstate
who tried very hard to be late
for early was boring
and she found herself snoring
while waiting around for her date.

There once was a cat on Hupi
who was gray and striped like a tie
he curled his tail in the sun
washed his whiskers for fun
and is known as the cuddliest guy.

—M. Hamilton

Lake Garfield Haiku

my pale arms before me
as I swim the jade green lake—
appear, disappear

*

drinking lemonade
ice cubes chime to the low notes
as I tip the glass

*

a patch of wild thyme—
here and there a blossom shakes
where bees are working

— Laura Denman

The Legendary Chairs at the Bidwell House Museum

Of all the eighteenth-century great Americans who were contemporaries of Reverend Adonijah Bidwell of Tyringham and Monterey, one of the most significant was the greatest scientist of the 1700s, Benjamin Franklin. January marks the 300th anniversary of Franklin's birth, and no one would contest his title as the quintessential American. Franklin is often credited with the idea of a "rocking chair" and he did put rockers on one of his straight chairs; however, further research suggests he was not the first person to have the idea.

The question of rocking chairs is an interesting one for the Bidwell House Museum on Art School Road. On his death inventory of personal possessions in 1784, Bidwell is listed as owning 48 chairs. There are no remarks about a rocking chair. In re-creating the inventory for the colonial museum we would ask if it were likely there would be a rocking chair on the premises. We know the love affair with rocking chairs is distinctly American. Abraham Lincoln, John Kennedy, and Ronald Reagan each had a favorite rocking chair. Old issues of *Antiques Magazine* credit Franklin with the original idea, and the premise persists on a multitude of web sites and in books.

Rocking cradles were used as early as the Middle Ages. The word "rocker" described the person who rocked the baby in a cradle. Perhaps it was an independent idea that spontaneously emerged in various parts of the world, but as far as we know now, the first rocking chair was made in Germany about 1710 when a straight chair had skates applied to bottom legs. In 1740 in Sweden a "gungstal" was made—the word means rocking chair; it had six legs on two rocking slats and continued to be popular to the 1870s. Rocking horses predate the chairs and are found throughout Europe. The word "rocking chair" was entered in the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1787.

In England in 1740, a Windsor Rocker was made—reportedly near Windsor Castle, hence the name. It was intended as a garden chair. Perhaps Benjamin Franklin borrowed the idea on one of his trips abroad, but we know the American Windsor was made principally in Philadelphia and introduced throughout the colonies about 1750.

That means that Rev. Bidwell could have acquired a rocking chair for his handsomely appointed colonial saltbox at some time during his residency. Certainly the high-back settle near the hearth in the Keeping Room and the host of chairs now in the museum are indicative of Bidwell's need to seat his congregation when the winter winds at the Meeting House—a quarter mile to the south of the parsonage—were too fierce to withstand during meetings that lasted for hours. The reverend often complained that the roof of the Meeting House needed to be completed or repaired.

Although newspapers were not readily available to Bidwell until after the Revolution, I think he would have known about Benjamin Franklin through pamphlets distributed in the colony. It was only two years after Bidwell moved to Tyringham that Franklin proposed his Plan of Union at a meeting in Albany, New York. Because the parsonage and Meeting House mark the demographic center of Tyringham (Monterey) prior to the Revolution, and because of its location on the Royal Hemlock Road linking the Boston Post Road to Albany, I would guess that Bidwell had political meetings in the house and that more than a few rebels surreptitiously sat in those chairs prior to and during the American Revolution.

Soon after the Revolution, Bidwell was appalled by the new taxes on farmers at the state and local levels. If he had lived a few more years, he could have been a major participant in Shays' Rebellion—Great Barrington was a hotbed for the insurrection. We have an angry and heart-rending speech Bidwell gave to the local town fathers comparing their new taxes to those imposed by the British Parliament.

If chairs could talk! In the museum we have a small Shaker Rocker in the Children's Room. An authentic 1930s chair, the Shaker Rockers date from 1820—even though the first independent communities

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of Shakers were founded in America in 1774. The Bidwell Shaker chair would then be applicable to the second generation of Bidwells who inhabited the house and knew about the Shaker community just over the hill in Tyringham. The Keeping Room has a host of genuine and attractive Shaker boxes, but they would have been among possessions of Bidwell's sons.

Perhaps the most controversial chair on the premises is in the barn! A narrow straight-backed primitive chair without legs, it looks like it could have been attached to a wall with nails, but it has no nail holes. What was it used for? It was a mystery until I saw a similar one in a book on early colonial furniture. These were barber's chairs — utilized by itinerant barbers who were called "chirugeon" in the colonies. Most colonists had no chairs, only benches, and the chair carried by the itinerant barber did not take much space in his wagon. The chair would be propped up against a building with the occupant's legs facing the building and the top of the chair leaning on a small table arrayed with the tools of the trade. The barber could then do what needed to be done. "Chirugeons" performed all kinds of surgeries until a law was passed in the mid-eighteenth-century limiting their services to hair cutting, shaving, dentistry, and blood-letting. This chair was so narrow that it might be possible to tie the patient (or victim) to it.

The Bidwell House Museum has a tufted chaise longue, an upholstered wingback, and a white Heppelwhite in need of reupholstery. Could Reverend Bidwell have owned these in this frontier community? Come and see us when the season opens and engage in our continuing dialogue as we re-create the past and discover our rich local heritage. Visit our Bidwell Museum website for a sampling of chairs: bidwellhousemuseum.org., maintained by member and local volunteer Pam Johnson. Benjamin Franklin would love our web page and you will too.

— Martha LaCroix Dailey, Director
The Bidwell House Museum

Dual Homeowners Corner

The snow-dotted Berkshire Hills and the crackling Lake Buel ice deliver a variety of messages. One could sit back with a book in hand and read for a while, or snooze a while, or think about the real concerns: who will bring in the logs for the fire and the location of the additional blankets that were set aside in haste last spring before the family came down the hill for the all-too-short summer visit.

Restful winter moments are pushed aside, not without some resistance, by plans for summer 2006 with our children, grandchildren, other family members, and dear friends. The Tanglewood summer program arrived and stimulated our enthusiasm to start planning to attend the concerts and to look for news from the Berkshire Theatre Festival and the other summer festivals and events. The catalogs of flowers and plants are starting to arrive.

It was wonderful to talk with our family during the holiday visits and hear about their memories of positive experiences at the lake and in the Berkshire environment. We would not exchange Berkshire dreams and activities for the Taj Mahal. The cottage on the lake is not a place, but a state of mind. Always a promise of things to do and wonderful memories of things we have done together.

— Tom and Barbara Haver

Music at the General Store

Avoid the winter blahs. Come to the Monterey General Store on these dark and cold February Thursday nights for music, warmth, good food, and more music. The music goes from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., with no cover charge. Light dinner is available from 6:00–7:30. For more information, call the store, 413-528-4437

February 2
Mac Caldwell
February 9
Ryc Powers
February 16
Robin O'Herin
February 23
Hailey and Sammy Brown
Special Event, Sun., Feb 19, 3–5 p.m.
Family/Children's Concert, John Sellew and Tom Ingersoll

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Monterey Knitting Circle Continues Feb. 15th

The next meeting of the knitting circle will be held on Wednesday, February 15, at 6:00 p.m. We will meet in the Monterey General Store, which will be closed for business but open for creativity. We've had two successful meetings, and the interest and numbers of knitters are increasing. We would like to thank Kenn Basler again for opening up the store to us.

We hope to continue opening up the world of knitting to beginning knitters as well as offering a creative camaraderie for experienced knitters. Please join us.

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Circus Is a Grand Event

The Dwarf-Giants take a bow.

On Friday, November 17, a grand circus performance took place at the Berkshire South Community Center in Great Barrington. It was headed by Kevin O'Keefe and Roger (the Jester) Reed, with help from Meredyth (Dr. Marmalade) Babcock. The CATA-sponsored circus workshop included fifty CATA participants, seventeen home-schoolers, and three schooled children.

CATA (Community Access to the Arts) tries to get people with mental and physical disabilities involved in art. Projects by CATA include painting, music, and most recently a circus.

The circus workshop went on for two weeks, as the participants invented and practiced their acts. The show lasted approximately an hour and thirty minutes. It included six workshops. Most workshops included acrobatics, some used juggling, and one was focused entirely on balance.

As the name of the workshop was CATA's Circus Soup, at the beginning of the show selected people set about making one. The chefs added water, cream, salt, pepper, vegetables, and love until they discovered a boy in the soup, whom they chased offstage.

Following the soup came a circus parade, in which all acts of the circus paraded comically.

Then the first group, Animal Crackers, named for their animal-like routines, came to the stage. Their tricks included "Elephant Walk" and "Mushroom Patch." In Elephant Walk the cast paraded like elephants, while in Mushroom Patch participants performed under stretchy blue and green cloth.

In a guest act, the patrons of the arts (CATA) performed something that involved sitting on one another's knees.

Named for acrobatics and juggling tricks, the Acrojugs also used brilliantly colored and patterned gutters, along which balls were rolled in their performance. One trick used was the "Kid's Carousel," in which children put their feet down in the middle of the floor. Adults then spun the kids around spectacularly while grabbing their wrists.

The Jumping Jacks performed amazing acrobatic tricks including "Long Mount" and "Giza Pyramid." In Giza Pyramid people stood upon each other's shoulders to form a pyramid.

Act four, the Dwarf-Giants started with "Monkey Juggling." After that followed some of the most awe-inspiring feats in the whole show. In "Flying," adults supported children's bodies high in the air, after which the kids began to flap like birds. After "Flying" more amazing tricks followed, like "Plank." The Dwarf-Giants ended with a display of hoops and stretchy fabrics.

The Circus Surfers, act five, were focused on balance. In this act, CATA participants and others walked on pipes and wires raised above the ground, and balanced peacock feathers on their noses.

Ending off were Ladies and Gentlemen. They preformed headstands, cartwheels, and a dive roll into a hat.

At the end of the show the audience got up and danced with the performers. Everyone had a great time. I hope there is another circus next year.

—Jonah Carlson

The author participated in Acrojugs and Dwarf-Giants.

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Groundhog Day

While Monterey at midwinter lies nestled in the Berkshire mountains, the snowstorms and single-digit temperatures that came before and after Christmas linger on, like the carol "O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie, as in thy deep and endless sleep, the silent stars go by." Just reaching February 2nd on the calendar marks a milestone in out psyche and conjures up the fable of a solar mammal coming out of hibernation to play the role of a prophet of meteorology. If the sun should also come out and he sees his shadow, then he goes back to sleep away the last six weeks of a long winter.

The myth behind this scenario seems to be spun like a spider's web over the lofty rafters of a cabin-fever mentality and has roots taking us back to the old countries across the sea. In Ireland it is the same day as St. Brigid's celebration, which has pagan ties to fertility rites. In Scotland it is Candlemass, when the lighting of candles is considered sacred. Both celebrations have roots in an ancient Celtic celebration called Imbaloc. It is one of the four quarter days of the year, the midpoints between the spring and fall equinoxes and the summer and winter solstices.

In Scotland the medieval rule of thumb was, " If Candlemas be bright and clear, there'll be two winters in the year."

In England, the superstition is similar to the groundhog prophecy as well as that of Scotland: " If Candlemas be sunny and warm, ye mend your mittens and look for a storm."

In Germany, it is the badger or bear that is the prophet, which explains why today Groundhog Day is still celebrated in Pennsylvania by the descendants of German immigrants looking for Punxsutawney Phil.

In Wiltshire, England, a later midseason celebration takes place at Stonehenge, on June 21. There the ring of monoliths was built in such a way that the sun registers in solstitial alignment with the midsummer sunrise and the midwinter sunset. As many as 20,000 people annually gather for the midsummer observation, perhaps proving that planetary powers are still tugging at our mindset.

In the twelve stations of the zodiac, other creatures are in our horoscopes, such as the lion, fish, crab, bull, ram, scorpion, and a centaur, the half man, half horse, of Greek mythology. As the seasons pass by, we share the same earthly stage with other living creatures, as we all dance, twisting and turning, to the music of the spheres. The recent theory of intelligent design proposes that a superior mind orchestrated the miracle of it all. But it was Charles Darwin who took us out of the Dark Ages into the enlightenment of the science of animals. The mythology, however, lingers on, like the winter weather.

— George Emmons

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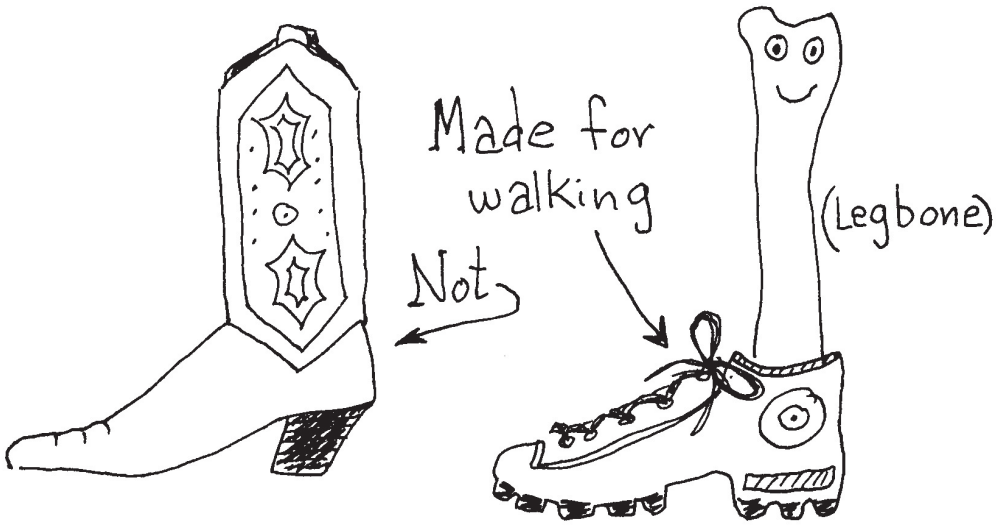
Walking Is Both of Them

My partner, Joe, loves to quote a cowboy he knew in Cody, Wyoming. This was a real cowboy, the kind that wears a baseball cap and rides around in a pickup truck—as opposed to the Hollywood or Marlboro variety that always springs to mind here in the Berkshires where we are romantic and out-of-date. Still, I think this quote could come from any brand of cowboy: "There's only two things I hate, and walkin' is both of them."

Come to think of it, you wouldn't have to be any kind of cowboy to voice this sentiment. You could just be a busy person, a rural mom or an urban guy in a hurry. I guess cowboys do not have a corner on the hurry market. We roll into the Price Chopper parking lot with errands at both the Chopper and Kmart. What to do? Where to park so we do the least imaginable walking? Do we go for the halfway mark and trundle off to Kmart first on our own two feet, stop back at the car to offload and then scurry to the Chopper and back again?

Or (let's be honest) do we look for a space close to the Chopper, do our business, and then drive east to Kmart and jump out again? What is it about our busy lives and the use of our legs? Maybe we are the savvy parker on weekdays when we feel the time crunch doing errands and then remake ourselves on weekends when we park at a trailhead and hike all day. We like to put on our hiking boots and spring off into the woods for a day of reacquaintance with the usefulness of our legs, but please don't ask us to pound the pavement from the drugstore to the pet food place. We'll load up with camping gear and knock off the high peaks, but these boots were not made for walkin' when it comes to lugging groceries around.

I have been thinking that when the oil runs out I am going to wish I remembered how to use my legs. So I decided to see what it feels like to walk to the Post Office and General Store here in Monterey. Can you believe I have lived here fulltime for more than thirty years and never tried this out? I have horses and a good hat. I am a romantic Hollywood-type cowboy, and yes I have ridden to town for many a Memorial Day parade, sporting my Cody, Wyoming, saddle and hat. But when it comes to picking up the paper and the mail, I am in the pickup, in a hurry.



So one day last week I got caught up on work around here and put on my boots and backpack. I checked my watch, for science and statistics, and set out for town. Hupi Road was sweet and familiar as I stretched out in a happy remembrance of animal ability. When I got to the pavement I even felt a little like the red fox that hesitates, then takes a deep breath and gets modern, at her peril.

But traffic is light on Route 23 on a weekday in winter, so I crossed to the north side and started eating up the miles with increasing confidence. I only leapt into the snowbank twice, and both times it was to reassure the coming motorist that I wasn't disputing his right to the asphalt. Hey, no problem.

I kept thinking about the ride in for the parade, all those years when we had a horse able-bodied enough to make the trip. I was taller, and I was on the other side of the road. There is a guard rail over there which bothered my right foot and stirrup, but being on horseback has made me smile my whole life, even with traffic, so I was always in a mood to enjoy myself. The horse would gobble at any greenery and I would wave to the May motorists. The parade was always a pleasure, though I used to wonder why I never rode in for the mail, seeing as how I smiled so much on my Memorial Day ride. Maybe it was the lack of a hitching rail at the post office.

On horseback you notice a lot that you don't get from the view out the windshield, plus there is no radio to make you think you are in Washington, or Iraq, or some music hall. One thing you notice is the ears of your horse. Another is the way the guard rail is bending your right foot. One of those rides I was coming home on the north side of the road and noticed yellow lady slippers, I won't say where. I'd never seen them from the car.

On foot, you might miss the ears, but you sure notice a lot more than you do even from horseback. For one thing, you

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have more time. I had fifty minutes in and fifty minutes home. That is time enough to see the world around you and spare a little for contemplation. There is no radio, but if you want to think about Washington and Iraq you can. Or you can think about the preponderance of pileated woodpecker workings this year and the fact that the birch twigs are so red already and it's only January. You can notice the sparkling clear crystals of salt on the pavement, like a lot of broken glass, and wonder what happened to the citizens' outcry over such a lot of salt in Monterey, when we used to pride ourselves on "Low Salt Use."

I had a great walk, obviously, and when I got home I looked at the ancient equines in our barnyard and let them know that although the highway is still out there, they don't have to think about it. I found out I can make it on my own. When the oil runs out, there won't be any mail for me to pick up, so I can leave my backpack at home. We won't be able to get grain for the horses, so they will be sleeping in the ground. But if I want to go visit the yellow lady slippers, I can do that because I have good legs. I am thinking the salt will disappear when the oil is gone, so the lady slippers just have to hang on until then. They are awfully close to the road and downhill of it. The Cody cowboy will get over his two hates of walking. He will change his boots, which were *not* made for it, and discover his leg bones, which were.

— Bonner J. McAllester

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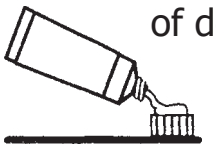

528-6520

Route 23 Monterey

TOWN OF MONTEREY

Skating Rink Hours / Winter 2006

Firehouse Pavilion

MONDAY–FRIDAY

Dawn to 3:00 p.m.	Public Skating
3:00 to 5:00 p.m.	Kids/Family Hockey Time
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.	Public Skating (may be closed for ice-making at this time; also, skaters may be asked to leave the ice)
7:00 p.m. on,	Hockey
except Wednesday	Public Skating

SATURDAY

9 a.m. to12:30 p.m.	Kids / Family Hockey
noon to 3:00 p.m.	Public Skating
3:00 to 5:00 p.m.	Kids/Family Hockey
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.	CLOSED
7:00 to 9:00 p.m.	Saturday Night Public Skating Party

SUNDAY

9 am - noon	Pickup Hockey
Noon to 3:00 p.m.	Public Skating
3:00 to 5:00 p.m.	Kids/Family Hockey
after 5 p.m.	CLOSED for major icemaking repair

Skating rink hours dawn–9 p.m.; if finishing a game after 9 p.m., please be considerate of your neighbors and keep it quiet.

Monterey Park Commissioners: Leroy Thorpe, 528-2164; Jim Edelman, 528-0006; David Crane, 644-9151; Valerie Zantay; Chandler Crawford, 528-6611

Ice Maintenance: Darryl Jassen, 528-1495; Rick Andrus, 528-1723

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Letter from College

A Crash Course in Conflict Management

What is conflict management? Put another way, how can you as an individual manage conflict? The answers to this question, the subject of one of my courses, certainly take longer to explore than the length of an article. However there are a few things that are critical to resolving conflicts on any level. Self-reflection is perhaps one of the single most important things you can do to aid the management of conflict. Our class had journal assignments, with prompts, in which we were asked to talk about various aspects of our own lives and consider topics along the lines of how we advocate for ourselves, our conflict styles, our own school experiences, both academic and social, and what we see as significant learning.

Once you know how you react to things and have taken time to consider certain aspects of your own life, it's time to figure out how to be assertive. There are three general categories for behavior: passive (also called submissive by some), aggressive, and assertive. These also vary depending on circumstances. Passive behavior generally denies true feelings, avoids conflicts, gives in to others, and neglects personal needs; aggressive behavior puts down others, is a physical or verbal attack, labels others, and tries to intimidate; assertive behavior falls in between. The definition of assertiveness is the ability to express our thoughts and feelings in direct, honest and appropriate ways.

One way to practice being assertive in order to help get your needs met is to use the three-part assertion message. This should be a clear message, respectful and direct, expressing true feelings, confronting the problem while still showing your own willingness to discuss and negotiate. Roughly following this formula can help: behavior + feelings + effects. When you do ___, I feel ___ because ____. Make sure that you're specific about how you feel and the specific effect the behavior in question has on you. There shouldn't be an emphasis on the other person. Use "I," not "you." Refrain from judgmental comments, be objective, and avoid using words that indicate absolutes. An example could be, "When you talk about me behind my back, it's hurtful to me because I'm not there to offer my side of the situation." You do have the right to protect your personal space, but results will be better if you remain firm and calm.

Attempting to confront someone can often yield a defensive or angry reaction, and this is where an assertion message quickly becomes an occasion for a conflict. Use the broken record technique to keep things on track. After you've calmly given your assertive message, the push–push back will probably come up. Listen to the other person and summarize what they've said to you; this will help lessen the defensive behavior. Don't get sidetracked by questions or attacks, simply take it in and then reassert yourself. Give the person time, if he or she gets extremely upset, suggest a specific time and place to continue. Once the person has accepted your assertion, work collaboratively for a solution.

When you are involved with a conflict in any way, it's important to try and figure out the nature of the conflict. There are several triggers: for relationship conflicts they include strong emotions, miscommunications, or misperceptions. When there are data conflicts, people disagree over relevant information, how data was gathered, and what it means. Value conflicts involve differences in ways of life and compatibility of belief systems. Structural results from destructive behaviors, geographic factors, or unequal control and interest conflicts are often caused by competition over perceived or actual needs or differences in people's ways of doing things.

In general, but particularly during mediation sessions, one major objective is seeing the conflict clearly and separating positions from interests. There are questions to ask to help determine the interests that are the true crux of the issue. We did a lot of role-playing in class and took turns helping mediate conflicts. It's important to have both people open to the mediation and then by the end to have them collaborate on their own solution without you solving the problem for them. This way all parties are invested in the plan, which needs to be specific in its implementation so people leave feeling like they have somewhere to go. Use questions such as "Why don't you tell me more about it (the issue)?" and "Can you help me understand why that's important?" We had several of these issues to do role-plays for; one concerned two roommates, one who wanted a black room, and the other who wanted a purple one. Those are the positions; the trick is then to get to the interests, why it is so

Transfer Station Winter Hours

Sunday 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Wednesday 8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

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Sunday Service · 10 a.m.
in the Meeting House

Elizabeth Goodman, Pastor

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528-5850

important. Once those are out on the table, then people can work toward a solution that's feasible to both.

Conflict Management for Life helped me see the areas where I could be more assertive and in doing so become a more confident person who gets my needs met. I learned how important it is, not just to listen, but to make oneself heard. College is about finding your voice, but it's also about learning how to get through life's challenging situations with a little compassion for those who are also struggling to do the same. It doesn't hurt to listen and sympathize, and in the same vein, it's often appropriate to make your own self heard. The willingness to collaborate that you demonstrate when talking with people will keep tensions low and productivity high. Solutions that have equal investments are often the most rewarding.

Each morning in class we had a quote up on the board, and I'll leave you with one that keeps coming up as I go about my life here at Middlebury College: "To truly listen is to risk being changed forever" (Sakej Henderson). It's something I face everyday, and I've found it's a risk worth taking.

— Tarsi Dunlop

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Michael Storch

Liz and Jesse Goodman with son at Monterey Christmas Party.

Park Planning Underway in Sandisfield

Friends of Yanner Park has hired Conway School of Landscape Design (CSLD) to create a master plan for a recreational park on Town Hill Road in Sandisfield. Friends of Yanner Park is a nonprofit organization formed to develop a park on the 257-acre parcel of land bequeathed to the Town of Sandisfield by Jack Yanner.

CSLD students pursue a master's degree in landscape design with an emphasis on environmentally sound planning and land-use management. The Yanner Park master plan will be part of the spring term project in which students learn by doing. Supervised by faculty and outside experts, the students will present design concepts and details for the planned playground, skating rink, walking trails, pavilion, and ballfield.

President of Friends of Yanner Park Robbin Campetti says the all-volunteer group looks forward to the development of the park as a community gathering place. Anyone wishing to make a donation or volunteer should call Ms. Campetti at (413) 258-4615 or visit www.yannerpark.org for more information.

ॐ

P.O. Box 9, 01245

Damaged Docks on Lake Garfield

To the Editor:

I arrived at my home on Lake Garfield this past January 1st to find the lake level to within 8 to 10 inches of normal high water. When I last saw the lake in November the 3-foot winter drawdown was complete. I skied around the shallow end of the lake, from the channel to the dam, and most docks were already damaged. I checked the outfall at the dam and found it to be either blocked or the gate valve closed.

I contacted our harbormaster, Dean Amidon, who said he would contact the town and have them draw down the lake again to 3 feet below normal high water.

The problem for all of us with docks on the lake is that, if the town closed the gate valve at the dam in November or December and allowed the lake water level to rise, ice formed around the dock pilings, lifting the docks as the level rose. All docks will be damaged because the water was allowed to rise over 2 feet above the normal 3-foot winter drawdown. I've had a dock on the lake for 38 years and have never seen the gate valve closed after winter drawdown was completed.

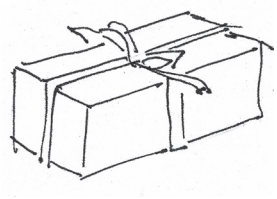
Most lakefront homeowners do not know this damage has occurred. They will arrive this spring and find damaged docks, but have no idea about what happened.

I hope the town will tell us why this happened.

— Bill Pasco

Michael Storch

Music night at Monterey General Store.



Little Dog under the Wagon

To the Editor:

Thank you for putting my request for the poem "The Little Dog under the Wagon" in your newspaper. I received a poem from a lady in Washington, D.C., also one from a lady in New York. I was surprised to hear of several others who read or recited it to their children or grandchildren. My mother died when my twin sister and I were eight years old. I learned parts of it from hearing her recite it, and it means a lot to me to have it all.

Thanks to everyone.

— Eleanor Kimberley

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Calendar

Every Monday (exc. holidays): Select Board meeting, 8:30 a.m.–noon, Town Offices.

Thursday, February 2: Music at the General Store, 7-9 p.m. with Mac Caldwell.

Saturday, February 4: Democratic Caucus, 10 a.m. in the Meetinghouse Community Room.

Wednesday, February 8: Community Potluck with MaryKate Jordan, 6 p.m. in the Community Room of the Monterey Meetinghouse. See p.4.

Thursday, February 9:

Free blood pressure clinic, 2–3 p.m., Town Offices, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc.

Music at the General Store, 7-9 p.m. with Ryc Powers.

Tuesday, February 14: Valentines Day

Wednesday, February 15: Monterey Knitting Circle meets at 6 p.m. at the General Store. All welcome.

Thursday, February 16: Music at the General Store, 7-9 p.m. with Robin O'Herin.

Friday, February 19: Cultural Council presents a pastel workshop with Gregory Maichack from 7-9 p.m. in the Community Room of the Meetinghouse. See p. 10.

Sunday, February 19: Music afternoon with John Sellew and Tom Ingersoll at the Monterey General Store, 3-5 p.m., hot chocolate and treats available.

Monday, February 20: Presidents Day observed. Town Office closed.

Thursday, February 23: Music at the General Store, 7-9 p.m. with Hailey and Sammy Brown.

Saturday, February 25: Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 p.m., Sheffield Grange, Rt. 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel. All dances are taught. Adults $6, children $3.

MONTEREY ICE SKATING PARTY!

At the Ice Skating Rink
Fire House Pavillion

Tuesday, February 21
11:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
(*weather & ice conditions permitting*)

Food!!! Drinks!!! Friends!!!
Fun!!! Music!!!

Non-skaters are encouraged to bring sleds to play and sled outside in the snow!

Sponsored by
the Monterey Park Commission

The Observer
December 26–January 25

High temp. (1/22)	55°
Low temp. (1/16)	-4°
Avg. high temp.	37.7°
Avg. low temp.	20.2°
Avg. temp.	29°
Total precipitation (rain and melted snow)	8.54 in.
Total snowfall for season	40.2 in.
Precipitation occurred on 21 days	
Total precipitation since Oct. 1	33.25 in.

Contributors

We thank the following folks for their contributions; it is readers like you that make it possible for us to continue publishing. We know our readers receive requests from many worthy organizations for financial help and are grateful that you include the *News* in your giving.

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